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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 3923
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3050
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RHMFISS/USOUTHAF DAVIS MONTHAN AFB AZ
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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 000497

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/05/2028
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [EC](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT CORREA'S RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR ON MANTA
FOL

REF: WHA/AND E-MAILS OF APRIL 23 AND 28

Classified By: Ambassador Linda Jewell for Reasons 1.4 (b&d)

¶1. (C) Acting on interagency instructions contained in Ref A, the Ambassador raised the future of the U.S. Forward Operating Location (FOL) in Manta with President Correa on the margins of a farewell luncheon June 4. She said the USG understands that the GOE does not support renewing the existing FOL agreement on current terms and that the proposed new constitution would place clear constraints on a continued permanent U.S. military presence at the Eloy Alfaro Air Base in Manta. The Ambassador asked if there were any formula that might be acceptable post-2009 that would allow elements of the successful cooperation at the FOL to continue, suggesting specifically the example of continued U.S. flights operated by civilian agencies such as U.S. Customs or the Coast Guard.

¶2. (C) Correa said that all of the facilities must fall under the control of the GOE following the end of the current agreement. Retaining any part of the facility for exclusive U.S. use is not possible. However, he indicated that he was quite open to discussing U.S. aircraft from the Coast Guard and Customs using the airfield at Manta for flights in the future. The Ambassador did not go further into details of how this might work, but options including a fee for service model appear to be possible.

¶3. (C) Correa's tone was neutral and not belligerent. His response was consistent with his government's perceived need to protect national sovereignty, to avoid the perception of a foreign "base" on Ecuadorian soil, while remaining committed to continued bilateral counternarcotics cooperation.

Jewell